



PRESS RELEASE
August 20, 2014

JEDCO Business Incubator Graduate Recognized on Inc. 5000 List of Fastest Growing Companies

(Jefferson Parish, La) -- [The Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) would like to congratulate [Global Commerce & Services](#) on their newest achievement. The company was recently awarded position #219 on the [2014 Inc. 5000 list](#) of fastest growing private companies in the nation.

This award-winning information technology company graduated from JEDCO's business incubator program in June 2014. According to a letter from Eric Schurenberg, President and Editor in Chief of *Inc.* magazine, Global Commerce & Services had to grow more than 942% since 2011 to make it onto this year's prestigious list. In fact, Global Commerce & Services grew [2,041%](#) in the last three years, bringing in \$3.5 million in revenue in 2013 and creating 11 new jobs. The company was also ranked #3 on *Inc.*'s Top Louisiana Companies list and #15 on the Top Government Services Companies list.

Founded by Joaneane Smith, Global Commerce & Services was fostered through the JEDCO business incubator program. In its time with JEDCO, the local company extended its reach across America. It has proven itself as a leader in information technology services, serving a variety of national clients, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Department of Navy, Department of Army, the Business Transformation Agency and the Defense Information Systems Agency.

Smith has been recognized on numerous occasions for her work in the IT industry. She was awarded the 2010 and 2011 USDA Office of Procurement and Property Management Hubzone Contractor of the Year. Joaneane Smith was also named the 2011 SBA District Minority Small Business Person of the Year - Louisiana District. Smith was featured on "Inside Business," a live broadcast that focuses on emerging small business concerns and in 2013, she participated in a Washington D.C. Senate hearing to discuss how the government furlough affected her company. Joaneane is also a graduate of the Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses Program at Delgado Community College. Today, Smith and her team can add their spot on the Inc. 5000 to a long list of achievements.

"I am deeply honored to be selected for the Inc. 5000 list this year," Smith says. "I am also thankful for the privilege to be recognized for our growth and hard work."

Jefferson Parish companies had an excellent showing on the Inc. 500. The below companies also earned spots on the list, joining the ranks of notable alumni, such as Under Armour, Microsoft, and Patagonia.

#52 [MaxHome](#): This Elmwood-based company not only made the Inc. 5000 list, but it also ranked #1 on the Top 20 Construction Companies list and #2 on the Top Louisiana Companies list. The company grew 5,439% in three years, creating 47 new jobs and bringing in \$5.7 million in revenue in 2013. MaxHome specializes in home

remodeling.

#1441 [Hunt Telecommunications](#): Hunt, a local IT company based out of Metairie, grew 296% in three years and was #14 on the list of Louisiana companies that made the Inc. 5000. The company brought in \$16.3 million in 2013 and created 46 jobs over the last three years.

#2679 [AAC Enterprises](#): A regular on Inc.'s fastest growing company list, AAC Enterprises has appeared on the list five times since 2010. AAC Enterprises ranked #19 on the Top Louisiana Companies list this year. The Fat City-based company has grown 140% in three years. AAC won JEDCO's 2012 Small Business of the Year Award. It also received the SBA Exporter of the Year Award in 2013. In the last three years, the company has created 13 jobs. It brought in \$4.6 million in revenue in 2013. The company specializes in designing and selling custom-made lights for automobiles.

#3025 [Tasc Performance](#): This Metairie-based apparel company grew 118% over the last three years. It added seven jobs since 2010 and brought in \$5.4 million in revenue in 2013.

"We are delighted to learn of the successes achieved by our former incubator tenant, Global Commerce & Services, and all of our Jefferson Parish companies," says Jerry Bologna, JEDCO Executive Director. "The Inc. 5000 has a long history of highlighting exceptional growth and successes. To be featured on this list speaks volumes to the hard work and dedication fostered within our local businesses. We would like to extend our congratulations to all of the Jefferson Parish companies on the list. The honor is much deserved."

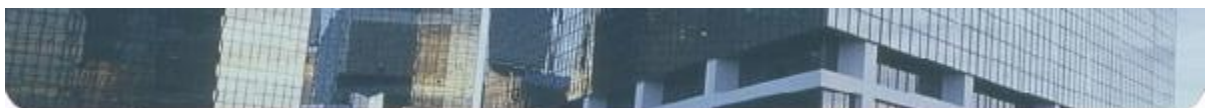
All companies featured on the Inc. 5000 will be honored at the Inc. 5000 Conference and Awards Ceremony in Phoenix, AZ in October.

###

[The JEDCO Business Innovation Center](#) is located at the Churchill Technology and Business Park in Avondale. Designed to connect entrepreneurs with the resources they need to help transform ideas into viable business ventures, the Business Innovation Center offers below-market rate office space and a wide range of tools to help companies get started. Offices come equipped with office furniture, telephone service, wireless internet, copy and fax machine, conference rooms, video conference capabilities, Smartboard technology and 24/7 secure access. For more information about the business incubator program, visit JEDCO's website at www.jedco.org or call (504) 875-3908.

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www.jedco.org



The West Bank Beacon



Volume 6, Issue 3

Proudly Highlighting the News of West Jefferson, Algiers and Plaquemines

AUGUST 2014

**JEFFERSON
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**MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT**

page 4



**LES MILES' QUEST
FOR RESPECT**

page 6



**DEVICE ADVICE
FOR STUDENTS**

page 18



**COASTAL IMPACT
PROGRAMS**

page 23



JEDCO
Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission

Elected officials and community leaders come together to celebrate the grand opening of the JEDCO Conference Center in the Churchill Technology and Business Park on the West Bank.

What does an economic development organization do?

JEDCO is tasked with enhancing the business climate in Jefferson Parish. We improve our economic vitality through business retention, expansion, attraction and job creation. Through our award-winning business retention and expansion program, we aim to provide an exceptional experience for each company we assist. JEDCO offers a variety of services to support our local businesses as they grow and find success in Jefferson Parish; we deliver customized tax incentive programs, small business financing, site searches, business incubation services and demographic reports. Our dedicated staff goes out into the community daily to better understand the needs of our local business owners and to arm them with all of the tools they need to thrive.

How many employees are employed by JEDCO?

We currently have 15 employees who are extremely dedicated to the Jefferson Parish business community.

What were some of JEDCO's biggest accomplishment in the past year?

2013 was the best year in JEDCO's history! We played a role in the attraction of a number of very large projects that brought in over a billion dollars in investment to our community last year. After a very extensive site selection process, Dyno Nobel, a global leader in the chemical industry, chose to locate their newest facility in Waggaman. The company is in the process of building an \$850 million ammonia production facility at Cornerstone Chemical Complex. Combined with some updates to Cornerstone's infrastructure, the total project cost is over a billion dollars. The plant will begin operations in 2016, creating 65 high-paying jobs.

JEDCO also found a new home in Jefferson Parish for Starr Textile Services, a commercial laundry facility that serves the local hospitality industry. JEDCO identified a site that met the growing company's needs. JEDCO also financed \$4.3 million of the \$10 million project, making it the largest SBA 504 loan in JEDCO history.

The Smoothie King international headquarters relocated to Jefferson Parish in 2013. The frozen drink franchise got its start in Jefferson Parish in 1973 and JEDCO helped the company move back to its roots. Since locating back to Jefferson, Smoothie King has launched an aggressive growth strategy to open 1,000 new stores by 2017. The company recently partnered with the Pelicans to secure the naming rights to the Smoothie King Center, further establishing itself as a Greater New Orleans staple.

In April, JEDCO welcomed 4th Source to Jefferson Parish. This North American IT company decided to relocate its headquarters from Georgia to the City of Kenner. The company will create 300 high-paying jobs and boost the technology industry in the Greater New Orleans region.

What does JEDCO do to help local entrepreneurs?

JEDCO has a long history of assisting entrepreneurs and startup companies. Currently, JEDCO runs the Business Innovation Center, our business incubator, at the Churchill Technology and Business Park on the West Bank. Designed to connect entrepreneurs with the resources they need to help transform ideas into viable business ventures, the Business Innovation Center offers below-market rate office space and a wide range of tools to help companies get started.

In 2013, JEDCO launched a pitch competition for entrepreneurs with ties to Jefferson Parish. The competition provided entrepreneurs with a platform to share their ideas in front of local business leaders and potential customers. Held during Idea Village's New Orleans Entrepreneur Week, the JEDCO Challenge offers entrepreneurs the chance to compete for a business boosting prize package of cash and in-kind services.

JEDCO also recently launched the Grow with JEDCO series. Each month, JEDCO hosts a free educational seminar to entrepreneurs and small business owners. Through these seminars, JEDCO provides opportunities for small business owners to connect with business leaders and experts in business growth, providing them with the tools and information to move a small business to the next level of development.

What is JEDCO's role in the development of the West Bank?

We often say the West Bank is the final frontier for development in Jefferson Parish. There are so many opportunities for growth! JEDCO saw those opportunities a long time ago, identifying a massive site upon which to build the Churchill Technology and Business Park. The Park, located in the newly-branded Fairfield community, offers 500-acres of developable land right in the heart of the largest intermodal transportation system in the South.

JEDCO's administrative office was the first building in the technology park, paving the way for future development. It wasn't long before other buildings began to pop up. Churchill Park is now home to the Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy, a magnet school for the region's best and brightest students, and the JEDCO Conference Center, a beautiful, high-tech facility for corporate events. JEDCO recently announced a partnership with Delgado Community College. Delgado will build its River City Campus in Churchill Park, which will cater to 3,000 students with an interest in marine-related trades. JEDCO continues to market the site to additional prospects.

JEDCO also played a role in bringing the NOLA Motorsports Park to the West Bank. JEDCO helped NOLA Motorsports identify the site where its state-of-the-art facility currently sits. The park recently announced plans to host an IndyCar race in 2015, which will bring an estimated 80,000 people to the West Bank of Jefferson Parish.

JEDCO is a major stakeholder in the West Bank Revitalization Study. Commissioned by the Parish Council, the study identifies opportunities for future development and growth on the West Bank. The report highlights growing industry trends, workforce development, housing opportunities and small business incentives as some areas of emphasis. The study also offers a suggested course of action to continue growth and increased regional connectivity across the West Bank community.

What is the most important aspect of JEDCO's success?

JEDCO's efforts to improve the economic climate in Jefferson Parish wouldn't be possible without the support of our community. It is through our cooperation with the Jefferson Parish Council and Administration, our elected officials, our business organizations, like the Jefferson Chamber, and our business leaders that we have been able to attract and retain so many companies in this community. We also work very closely with Louisiana Economic Development and Greater New Orleans, Inc., our regional partner to identify prospective businesses and engage with them. JEDCO's successes are fueled by a strong, engaged community.

What is the value of having a partnership between JEDCO and the Jefferson Chamber?

JEDCO's partnership with the Jefferson Chamber is extremely vital to the success of this organization. For years, we've worked together to create the region's preferred business climate. The Chamber not only offers JEDCO an opportunity to cultivate relationships and expand our diverse network of businesses, but JEDCO has really come to rely upon the Chamber's strong advocacy and support of major initiatives that help aid in JEDCO's overall mission. We strongly encourage businesses to get involved with the Jefferson Chamber, an organization that really does everything it can to serve its community in a number of different capacities. We hold the Chamber in very high regard and find our partnership to be extremely beneficial.

About JEDCO:

JEDCO is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in our area. Since its inception in 1987, JEDCO has aided thousands of companies through business incubator and loan programs, tax incentives and rebate programs, workforce development and information services. While dedicated to assisting existing Jefferson Parish businesses, JEDCO's efforts also target the recruitment of new businesses for the area. ✨

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SILICON BAYOU NEWS

JEDCO Releases 2013 Annual Report, Highlights Most Successful Year Yet

[Julia Ballard](#) | August 15, 2014 | [0 Comments](#)

The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission](#) (JEDCO) is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in the area.

It's been a big year for the New Orleans-area organization. They [hired two new economic development specialists](#) back in May and unveiled a [state-of-the-art conference center](#) located at their headquarters in the newly rebranded Fairfield.



The organization has also released the [2013 JEDCO Annual Report](#), showing off its most successful year in history. The report explains: “For 27 years, JEDCO has played a role in enhancing the economic outlook of Jefferson Parish through retention, expansion and job attraction.”

While the parish itself celebrated an economic development milestone, so did the organization.

“From attracting the Smoothie King corporate headquarters back to Jefferson Parish to helping Dyno Nobel, a global leader in the chemical industry, recognize the benefits of doing business in this

community, JEDCO has played a vital role in enhancing our local business climate,” said Stan Salathe, Chairman of the Board in 2013.

The report, along with more information about JEDCO's successes can be found at jedco.org.



PRESS RELEASE
August 8, 2014

JEDCO to Host Business Development Seminar for Small Businesses

Part of Grow with JEDCO Seminar Series

(Fairfield, La) -- Congratulations! Your startup company is up-and-running. Now what? The second stage of a company's lifespan is crucial to overall development. The steps you take now will determine the future of your business. The [Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission \(JEDCO\)](#) wants to help you find success.

As part of the [Grow with JEDCO](#) seminar series, the economic development commission partnered with [Simmons & White](#) and the [Louisiana Small Business Development Center \(LSBDC\)](#) to host:

"Business Development: Steps You Can Take to Grow Your Company"

This educational seminar will offer steps that small and medium-size businesses can take to reach the next level of business success. Business development experts, Mark Lewis (Simmons & White) and Scott Uffman (LSBDC), will cover some of following topics to help you grow your business:

- Louisiana Economic Gardening - A state program that provides you with resources to help your company develop strategies for growth, and it's free(certain qualifications do apply though)!
- Understanding what business development is all about
- Qualities of a successful business development organization and/or person
- Business development ideas for growth
- The process of business development and measuring your success

Join us Wednesday, August 20th, at the East Bank Regional Library's Jefferson Room (4747 W. Napoleon Ave. Metairie) from 9:00-10:30. Admission is FREE, but registration is required to attend. The event is open to all businesses and entrepreneurs. Click [here](#) to register on the JEDCO website. For more information, contact Kelsey Scram at kscram@jedco.org or call (504) 875-3927.

###

About JEDCO: JEDCO is an independent, yet complementary arm of Jefferson Parish government with the main objective of attracting, growing and creating new business in our area. Since its inception in 1987, JEDCO has

aided thousands of companies through [business incubator](#) and [loan programs, tax incentives and rebate programs, workforce development](#) and information services. While dedicated to assisting existing Jefferson Parish businesses, JEDCO's efforts also target the recruitment of new businesses for the area.

Simmons & White: A local consulting firm, Simmons & White partners with high-potential companies to navigate challenges and opportunities. Whether you are troubleshooting management issues, seeking best practices, or exploring new ways to grow, our team of experts can help. Simmons & White provides a comprehensive range of services in the areas of financial management, business process improvement, sales and marketing, access to capital, policies and procedures, risk management, strategy and technology.

About the LSBDC: The Louisiana Small Business Development Center is the state's largest and most accessible source of assistance for entrepreneurs and the only statewide nationally accredited program that provides business consulting to entrepreneurs at no cost. Through a network of 10 centers, the LSBDC provides high quality one-on-one consulting, training and information resources to help your business start, grow and succeed.

About the Business Innovation Center at Churchill: [The Business Innovation Center at Churchill](#) provides a place to develop up-and-coming businesses. Not only can startups find office space at below-market rent, but the incubator program is designed to connect business innovators, market experts and capital providers to transform business ideas into viable business ventures. The Business Innovation Center at Churchill provides an atmosphere in which startup businesses can survive and prosper.

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JEDCO hosting a session on small business growth Aug. 20



An image from the website of the Jefferson Parish Economic Development Commission in December 2013. (*JEDCO*)

[Print](#)



By [Mark Waller, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

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on August 08, 2014 at 1:11 PM, updated August 08, 2014 at 1:12 PM

The [Jefferson Economic Development Commission](#) is hosting a session on growth for small and medium-sized businesses on Aug. 20 at 9 a.m. at the East Bank Regional Library, 4747 W. Napoleon Ave., in Metairie. The session is free but [registration is required](#).

Speakers from the Simmons & White executive consultancy and the Louisiana Small Business Development Center will discuss business development and resources available from the state. Simmons & White's Mark Lewis and the Development Center's Scott Uffman will be presenters.

Anyone seeking more information can contact Kelsey Scram of JEDCO at kscram@jedco.org or 504.875.3927.

Grow with JEDCO presents

Business Development: Steps You Can Take to Grow Your Company

Congratulations! Your startup is up-and-running! Now what?

This educational seminar will offer steps small & medium-size businesses can take to reach the next level of business success. Business development experts, Mark Lewis (Simmons & White) and Scott Uffman (LSBDC), will team up to talk about tips that can help you grow your business.

Topics include:

- Louisiana Economic Gardening
- Understanding what business development is all about
- Qualities of a successful business development organization
- Business development ideas for growth

Grow with JEDCO is an educational series for small businesses and entrepreneurs. Throughout the year, JEDCO will host a number of events to help you grow and find success locally.

August 20, 2014

9:00 - 10:30

East Bank Regional Library

Jefferson Room

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Register for this **FREE** event at
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Hollywood South incentives working in Jefferson Parish



wwltv.com

Posted on July 18, 2014 at 6:15 PM

Paul Murphy / Eyewitness News

Email: pmurphy@wwltv.com | Twitter: [@pmurphywwl](https://twitter.com/pmurphywwl)

Hollywood South is not only alive and well, but thriving in Jefferson Parish. This year, an impressive line up of film projects earned about \$335,000 from the parish's own film incentive program.

Recipients include the award winning "Dallas Buyers Club", "This Is The End", "Grudge Match" and "Hateship Loveship". The productions took advantage of a program that gives them 3 percent cash back on what they spend in Jefferson Parish.

"Jefferson Parish's program is audited," Jefferson Parish President John Young said. "It has to be money spent on facilities, renting facilities in Jefferson Parish, and it has to be salaries paid to Jefferson Parish residents."

Young said \$2 million in incentives has resulted in \$88 million in local spending over the past 10 years.

Josh Rongey uses the program to help attract production companies to his G Street Films facility in Elmwood. He and his father turned an old warehouse into storage and shooting space for the film industry. Their latest tenant is the new NCIS-New Orleans TV show on CBS.

"I'm like Dad, I really think if we clear out some of these warehouses and we do some of these things, if we meet the right people we can get in this, we can do this," Rongey said.

Rongey said they've been able to grow their business over the past five years, based in part on what the Jefferson Parish film incentive program is doing for the major producers they work with.

"The kicker that Jefferson Parish gives, that extra percentage, that 3 percent does make a difference. We're literally looking at expanding, building a sound stage outside. We acquired some property," Rongey said.

Young said the film incentive program helps Jefferson Parish compete with New Orleans, Baton Rouge and Shreveport, which also have thriving movie studios.

"It puts us on the map," Young said. "We've had some companies relocate here to service the film industry."



Smoothie King grows amidst new products and partnerships



The new Smoothie King Van, the product of a partnership with 360 Wraps and Gas Monkey Garage, will begin touring the country in Fall 2014. (Photo courtesy of Smoothie King)

[Print](#)



By [Jed Lipinski](#), [NOLA.com](#) | [The Times-Picayune](#)

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on August 06, 2014 at 6:08 PM, updated August 06, 2014 at 9:39 PM

Smoothie King, the New Orleans based smoothie retailer, has continued to grow since **CEO Wan Kim** arrived in New Orleans last year after introducing the smoothie concept to his home country of South Korea.

An earnings report for the company, released during a conference for team members and franchisees last weekend, showed that same-store sales jumped 7.16 percent in the first quarter of 2014 compared to last year and grew 9.79 in the second quarter.

Nearly 1,000 franchisees showed up for the conference, which Smoothie King spokeswoman Katherine LeBlanc described as twice the number from last year. The event also served to welcome the company's new CFO Richard Peabody, whose background includes more than 25 years in strategic planning and franchise management for brands like Taco Bueno and Checkers Drive-In.

In a phone interview, Kim attributed part of the company's growth to the brand's enhanced visibility. In February, Smoothie King won a 10-year deal to **rename the New Orleans Arena**, the home of the NBA's Pelicans, the Smoothie King Center. A new logo and slogan -- "Smoothies with a purpose" - - coincided with the renaming.

But Kim believed other factors were at work, namely new strategic partnerships, new products and a sense among franchisees that the 41-year-old company is being revitalized.

This year, Smoothie King has launched two new smoothies: Veggie Blend, the first of its beverages to use vegetables, and Greek Yogurt, a partnership with the Greek yogurt giant Chobani. Kim said the company has also invested \$3 million in IT to upgrade the franchises' computer systems.

Furthermore, the company will soon roll out the Smoothie King Van, a design conceived with the help of 360 Wraps and the stars of Gas Monkey Garage, an auto-body shop featured in the Discovery Channel show "Fast N' Loud." Starting this fall the van will travel the country, spreading the word and handing out Smoothie King samples.

In 2012, after purchasing the company from its founder Steve Kuhnau, Kim announced his goal to create 1,000 franchised and corporate Smoothie King stores across the U.S. In the first and second quarters of this year, Kim said, the company added 25 new franchises. He intends to add another 55 by the end of the fiscal year, he said.

At the conference, which was held at the Smoothie King Center, Kim spoke with hundreds of franchisees. "They told me they really appreciate the direction we're taking," he said. "That means a lot to us, because I know my team works very, very hard."

New Orleans CITYBUSINESS

Groundbreaking set for \$50M Gretna hotel

By: [Robin Shannon, Reporter](#) August 19, 2014 0

The developers behind a new \$50 million hotel project on Jefferson Parish's West Bank are set to begin construction.

Harvey-based BN Management will break ground Wednesday on a 123-room Marriott-branded Courtyard Inn that will be built on an 11-acre tract of land between Whitney Avenue and the West Bank Expressway. The hotel is the first phase of a larger development on the property, which is situated just over the Orleans Parish line. Future phases will include additional hotels and other commercial and retail activity.

Hi-Tech Commercial Contractors, a subsidiary of BN Management, are the general contractors for the project. Construction is expected to take between 14 and 16 months.

BN Management operates hotels in New Orleans, Marrero, Harvey, Chalmette and Berwick, and it also has a site in the works along Panama City Beach, Fla. The Gretna hotel would be the company's 10th development.

The triangular tract of undeveloped land has sat vacant for decades but not from a lack of interest. Jefferson Parish Councilman Ricky Templet, who represents the area, said as many as 20 plans have been put forth for the property, but all fell apart for one reason or another. The hotel proposal is the first to gain serious traction.

A key component that pushed the development forward was a request from BN Management to have the property annexed into Gretna city limits from Terrytown in unincorporated Jefferson Parish. The annexation drew opposition from some parish residents, who saw the move as a land grab by Gretna. The process was finalized in January after unanimous approval from the Gretna City Council and Jefferson Parish Council.



Gretna officials to break ground Wednesday on Marriott development

[Print](#)



By [Andrea Shaw, NOLA.com | The Times-Picayune](#)

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on August 20, 2014 at 8:13 AM, updated August 20, 2014 at 8:14 AM

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The developer of a multi-million hotel project in [Gretna](#) will break ground on with city officials Wednesday (Aug. 20) on a Courtyard by Marriott. BN Management of Harvey will build the hotel on a tract wedged between Algiers and Terrytown.

The ceremony begins at 1 p.m. at 5 West Bank Expressway. Bui Nguyen, chairman of BN Management, said the construction will mark the first phase of "a first-class development that will feature additional hotels and commercial activity."



Gretna [annexed the land](#), which lay in Terrytown, at Nguyen's request earlier this year. Despite opposition from some [Terrytown](#) residents, Jefferson Parish officials supported the annexation, citing the lack of parish provided sewer services to the property.

Attorney Mike Sherman, who represents BN Management, said the long dormant property's development will "bring jobs, taxes and economic activity to the

community."

THE NEW ORLEANS ADVOCATE

N.O. area adds 8,100 jobs over 12 months

[Show caption](#)

One-year boost expanded job total to 552,000

by bill lodge

blodge@theadvocate.com

Aug. 08, 2014

Nonfarm employment in the New Orleans metropolitan area increased by 8,100 jobs for the year ended June 30.

That one-year boost of 1.5 percent expanded the New Orleans area's rebounding job total to 552,000, according to seasonally unadjusted numbers released Friday by the [Louisiana Workforce Commission](#).

"Southeastern Louisiana appears to be entering a phase of growth unseen for decades," said Michael Hecht, president and chief executive officer of Greater New Orleans Inc.

Hecht said the region's economy is "underpinned by both oil and natural gas, supported by trade and advanced manufacturing and augmented further by technology and other new industries, like water management.

"Greater New Orleans has an exceptional opportunity for diversified job creation in the coming years. It is now our responsibility to make investments in [training](#) and [infrastructure](#) to maximize this economic opportunity."

The Baton Rouge metropolitan area fared even better, increasing its employment by 3.3 percent, or 12,700 jobs, in the year since June 2013. That expanded the nine-parish area's total nonfarm employment to 396,000.

"This preliminary data appears to be consistent with overall reports of the current [excellent economic conditions](#) — not just in the Baton Rouge area, but across all of south Louisiana," said Michael DiResto, of the Baton Rouge Area Chamber.

"These numbers are also consistent with the current low unemployment rate," said DiResto, BRAC's senior vice president for economic competitiveness.

Louisiana's preliminary not seasonally adjusted unemployment rate was 5.7 percent last month.

Nonfarm employment in the Lafayette area increased 1.8 percent over the 12 months, and that uptick hiked the metro's job total to 163,100 by the end of June.

Jason El Koubi, president and chief executive officer of the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, said Friday's numbers demonstrate that region's continued advancements.

"These latest job growth figures reflect our strong economic momentum in the Lafayette area," El Koubi said. "The overall numbers are even more impressive when you consider that these data show our region's private sector grew by 3,400 jobs over the past year, with government employment declining by about 500 jobs."

In that net increase of 2,900 jobs, "Almost every sector of our economy saw economic growth, with solid increases in the oil and gas, manufacturing, health care and hospitality sectors," El Koubi said.

Statewide, in seasonally adjusted figures, Louisiana's nonfarm employment increased by nearly 1 percent over the past year, totaling 1.97 million on June 30.

"Louisiana is doing well, and we have a very strong growth forecast for years to come," Curt Eysink, LWC executive director, said.

Nationwide, nonfarm employment reached nearly 138.8 million by June 30, a one-year hike of nearly 1.8 percent.

While the Baton Rouge area led Louisiana's metros in the number of new jobs, the smaller Lake Charles metro led the state in its rate of growth — 4.1 percent — and finished at 95,900.

For the one-year period, nonfarm jobs increased in the Houma area by 2.1 percent, expanding that total to 101,300.

The Monroe metro increased its jobs by 1.5 percent, finishing at 79,000.

Shreveport-area nonfarm jobs totaled 173,100, an increase of less than 0.5 percent.

Only the Alexandria metro lost jobs, suffering a one-year decrease of nearly 0.5 percent, dropping its nonfarm total to 62,500.

Unemployment rates in all eight metro areas were down year-over-year: Alexandria, to 6.1 from 7.7 percent; Baton Rouge, 5.4 percent from 7.3 percent; Houma-Thibodaux, 3.9 percent from 5.2 percent; Lafayette, 4.4 percent from 5.7 percent; Lake Charles, 5 percent from 7.4 percent; Monroe, 6.1 percent from 7.9 percent; New Orleans, 5.7 percent from 7.4 percent; and Shreveport-Bossier, 6.1 percent from 7.9 percent. The statewide rate of 5.7 percent was down from 7.4 percent.

The national rate dipped to 6.3 percent from 7.8 percent for the 12-month period.



Louisiana just 'scratching the surface' of potential in movie industry, Celtic Media Centre official says



na has only "scratched the surface" of what's possible in the film and movie industry, according to Patrick Mulhearn, the director of studio operations at the **Celtic Media Centre**.

Mulhearn spoke to reporters during a meeting of the Baton Rouge Press Club and offered a number of "Top Five" lists pertaining to the state's place in the current film industry. Much of his points directly referenced Louisiana's motion picture tax credits, the incentive program put in place -- in its current form -- in 2002. The program gives TV and movie producers spending at least \$300,000 a 30 percent tax credit on all in-

state production expenditures, plus an additional 5 percent credit on salaries paid to Louisiana residents.

The program has come under fire in the past. Some believe the tax incentives are overly generous, while others are protective of what they see as a necessary tool to bring to the state economic growth in a desirable industry.

"I am bullish about Baton Rouge," he said. "People from all over the world are coming to Baton Rouge because of the film industry, and what they have to say about it really, really makes you feel optimistic about the future here."

Here's a quick look at Mulhearn's main points, including the five ways the incentives have changed the state's industry and the five reasons to keep a strong film industry in Louisiana.

Five ways the motion picture tax credits changed Louisiana's film industry

5) "It took us from a less than \$10 million a year industry in 2001-2002 to a billion dollars worth of sales in less than a decade. That's a billion dollars worth of sales in Louisiana."

4) "It created a workforce. The IATSE, the biggest film union, in 2001, they had 136 members in Louisiana and most were out of work at the time. Now they have over 1,300 (members). Total industry in Louisiana right now of film jobs is about 14,000. ... How does that compare with other industries? They said Louisiana seafood is around 16,000."

3) "Volume. That's what's really changed. In 1994, i think we had 5 or 6 films that would have qualified for tax credits. Today, that number is between 100 and 150 projects per year."

2) "The quantity of films we have here has led to quality. We all know Louisiana is being recognized at the Academy Awards. ... What's going on here? It's that old adage that practice makes perfect. our crews have gotten really, really good. These are serious professionals that live and work here."

1) "It led to film infrastructure." Mulhearn noted the number of movie studios around the state like Moonbot Studios, Millenium Studios and Stageworks in Shreveport, the Nims Center in Harahan, Second Line Stages and the NASA Michoud facility around New Orleans and Celtic Media Centre in Baton Rouge. He also highlighted the importance of having Hollywood Trucks.



Top 5 reasons to keep a strong film industry in Louisiana

5) "We're diversifying Louisiana's economy. This has been an oil and gas and petrochemical state for as long as anybody can remember. ... Worldwide demand for American content is only going up, and Louisiana is ahead of the curve for a change. So here's an idea: Why not make the MPTC applicable to oil and gas

liability?"

4) "We're reversing brain drain. There's no doubt about it. ... The film industry is helping to retain our creative (people). ... I've had Californians move here and tell me it's like the reverse gold rush. It's the land of opportunity. Home ownership, they're doing that for the first time. Things are dying in states like California and we're lucky to have that. The American dream is alive and well in the film industry in Louisiana."

3) "Film jobs are great paying jobs, and it adds to our tax base. The average film job pays \$51,000 per year. The average union job in the film industry in Louisiana pays over \$63,000 per year, and that's with pensions and health care."

2) "Increased resident exposure. It is so hard to put a price tag on that. ... Florida says at least 11 percent of visitors came as a result of a TV show or film. ... Visitors to West Monroe (are because) of exposure. You can measure how much the state gave out in tax credits for the production of 'Duck Dynasty,' but no one has really measured the (return on investment) on the force that is 'Duck Dynasty' and Duck Commander and what it's been for the Robertsons.

1) "The shale of talented people and ideas in this state is just under the surface. The writers, the directors, the stars who are here now -- we just need to work on developing and refining our talent and ideas. We already need a Hollywood South Museum. There's no doubt we're generating history every day, but we've really just scratched the surface as far as realizing our true potential."



8.1.14

Louisiana's Business Climate Ranks No. 1 In Nation

LED FastStart® also ranks No. 1 for fifth consecutive year in Business Facilities 2014 Rankings Report

BATON ROUGE, La. — Today, *Business Facilities* magazine named Louisiana the No. 1 business climate in the U.S., the first time Louisiana has topped a national ranking of state business climates. In addition, LED FastStart® – Louisiana's customized workforce development program, created in 2008 – earned the No. 1 ranking for state workforce programs from *Business Facilities* for an unprecedented fifth year in a row.

The rankings are part of the *Business Facilities* 2014 State Rankings Report issued annually to gauge the competitiveness of state economic development programs and economic indicators across the nation. Louisiana also posted strong performances in a number of other categories, including: No. 2 for exports leaders; No. 3 for economic growth potential; No. 5 for best infrastructure; No. 8 for lowest industrial electricity rates; and No. 10 among state employment leaders.

Louisiana's ascent in the best business climate category has been continuous in recent years, from an initial appearance in the Top 10 at No. 8 in 2010, to No. 7 in 2011, No. 5 in 2012 and No. 4 last year. For LED FastStart, the fifth consecutive No. 1 ranking by *Business Facilities* caps a mounting series of accolades. In 2010, *Area Development* magazine recognized LED FastStart as one of three elite workforce programs in the South (along with Alabama and Georgia). In 2011, *The Economist* called FastStart "probably the most notable statewide workforce-development initiative [in the United States]."

Gov. Bobby Jindal said, "Prosperity begins with a quality job, and today there are more people working in Louisiana than ever before. When we took office in 2008, we sent a strong message to the world about our intention to make Louisiana the next frontier for business opportunity. Now, with the No. 1 business climate in the entire country, we know we are well on our way to accomplishing our ultimate goal of ensuring that every family in Louisiana has access to great career opportunities, just as we have worked tirelessly to ensure that every child in Louisiana can get a great education. This recognition from *Business Facilities*, one of the leading economic development publications for more than four decades, is proof of the remarkable turnaround that has occurred in Louisiana."

This year, Louisiana continued its streak of economic successes in the magazine's 10th annual rankings issue. In 2008, Louisiana registered a single Top 10 ranking in the *Business Facilities* report (No. 3 for manufacturing momentum). By 2010, the state recorded three Top 10 rankings, including its first No. 1 ranking for LED FastStart. By 2012, Louisiana had earned seven Top 10 rankings, followed by seven Top 10 rankings again in 2013, and nine Top 10 rankings this year.

A constant for Louisiana has been its workforce success, with *Business Facilities* Editor in Chief Jack Rogers writing in 2012 that “Louisiana's (LED) FastStart continues to be the gold standard for workforce training programs, which increasingly are an essential element in successful economic development projects. Businesses relocating to Louisiana can be certain they will have strong support from the state in acquiring and training skilled workers.”

In the 2014 *Business Facilities* Rankings Report, the magazine commented on Louisiana’s first-place ranking in the Best Business Climate category: “Pick a successful growth strategy other states are starting to replicate, and you’ll discover that Louisiana has made it work on a grand scale. Nowhere is this more evident than in the unprecedented cooperation between higher education resources and business in Louisiana.”

Since 2008, LED has secured economic development projects that are creating more than 83,000 new direct and indirect jobs and more than \$54 billion in new capital investment, along with hundreds of millions of dollars in new sales for Louisiana’s small businesses.

Major projects from leading digital media/technology companies – including IBM, CenturyLink, CSC, GE Capital, CGI, Gameloft and EA – are joining significant investments by such global companies as Sasol Ltd., Cheniere Energy, BASF, Nucor, Dow, Benteler, CF Industries, Bell Helicopter, Chiquita Brands, P&G and others to generate an unprecedented level of business investment in Louisiana.

The state’s No. 1 *Business Facilities* ranking continues a trend of rising business climate rankings since 2008. Louisiana now ranks higher in every national business-climate ranking than it ever did prior to 2008, including those published by *Area Development*, Beacon Hill Institute, *Business Facilities*, *Chief Executive*, CNBC, *Forbes*, Pollina Corporate Real Estate and *Site Selection*. In four national business climate rankings – *Area Development*, *Business Facilities*, *Chief Executive* and *Site Selection* – Louisiana now ranks among the Top 10 states in the U.S.

Site Selection named LED the best-performing state economic development agency in the nation in 2011, and Pollina Corporate Real Estate ranked LED tied for the best-performing state economic development agency in the nation in 2013.

Business Facilities has been a leading source of intelligence on corporate expansion and relocation projects since 1968. For more on the 2014 Rankings Report, visit businessfacilities.com.